

CLAIMS

I claim:

- 1 1. A method of applying a metal coating to graphite comprising:
2 anodic etching said graphite in an alkaline etchant, and then
3 electroplating said graphite.
- 1 2. The method as set forth in claim 1, comprising the following step between
2 said anodic etching and said electroplating:
3 Pd seeding said graphite.
- 1 3. The method as set forth in claim 2, comprising the following step between
2 said Pd seeding and said electroplating:
3 electroless plating to reinforce said Pd coating.
- 1 4. The method as set forth in claim 3, wherein at least Ni or Cu is deposited in
2 said electroless plating step.
- 1 5. The method as set forth in claim 1, comprising the following step between
2 said anodic etching and a subsequent step:
3 directly transferring said graphite, obtained with said anodic etching step, into
4 water or a weak aqueous solution.
- 1 6. The method as set forth in claim 5, wherein between said anodic etching and
2 said electroplating no ultrasound treatment is implemented.
- 1 7. The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein said electroplating involves at
2 least one of the following group: Ag, Cu, Ni and Sn.
- 1 8. The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein said electroplating utilizes a
2 current density in the range 0.1 to 10 A/dm².

1 9. The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the current duration in said
2 electroplating is in the range of 5 to 90 minutes.

1 10. The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein said anodic etching is done in a
2 solution of NaOH and/or KOH having a concentration in the range 10 to 70% by weight.

1 11. The method as set forth in claim 10, wherein said anodic etching is done at a
2 temperature in the range 20°C to 70°C.

1 12. The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein said graphite comprises graphite
2 particles bound by plastics.

1 13. A method of fabricating a solder connection to a graphite component
2 wherein, by a method as set forth in claim 1, a metal coating is deposited on said
3 graphite component, after which a solder pad is applied to said metal coating as thus
4 produced.

1 14. A method as set forth in claim 1, wherein said anodic etching is performed
2 with an applied electrical potential in the range of 4V to 20V.

1 15. A method as set forth in claim 14, wherein said anodic etching has a
2 duration in the range of 5 to 90 minutes, with the actual duration being inversely
3 proportional to the applied electrical potential.